

MOTION BY MAYOR MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH

December 6, 2005

MISSING CHILDREN

On April 20, 2004, the Board of Supervisors directed the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS), in collaboration with County law enforcement and social services agencies, to create a task force dedicated to identifying ways to locate children; developing alternative preventative solutions, and implementing programs to eliminate the issues of missing children. The Missing Children Task Force addressed many of the issues that effect this population. While DCFS has made significant efforts to identify why children are fleeing from placements and trying to locate youth who runaway, the Department failed to have the task force remain in tact to ensure ongoing problems facing runaway children in our foster care system were monitored. The task force was disbanded by DCFS without completing recommended changes.

As of December 2005, DCFS reported having initiated a total of 913 protective custody warrants for children and youth. Of those, 859 were warrants for children and youth who had run away from out-of-home care, and 54 warrants were issued for children who were abducted by a parent, relative, or public guardian. It is concerning that the numbers of runaway children persist.

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MOTION

Molina	_____
Burke	_____
Yaroslavsky	_____
Knabe	_____
Antonovich	_____

I, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors direct the Director of the Department of Children and Family Services to reconvene the “Missing Children” Task Force in order to continue in the identification and refinement of practices for the prevention and recovery of runaways; and to report back on a quarterly basis on planned and implemented practices to better serve children who have run away or have the potential to run away from out-of-home care. The quarterly reports should include the status of:

1. Existing Countywide and community-specific services and programs, including the support that the DCFS Emergency Response Command Post can provide;
2. Improved maintenance of the DCFS Missing Children Website to enable the provision of quality information on missing children related to numbers, demographics, and information that will evidence progress in both the prevention and recovering of missing children;
3. Enhancement of the DCFS Child Protection Hotline’s 24 hours/7 day per week ability to provide specialized support to DCFS in the screening and appropriate referral of calls it received regarding missing children;
4. Consideration of using the resources that will support the Countywide expansion of the Permanency Partners Program (P-3) to locate and plan for the permanency of runaway youth.

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